

Message Text

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51

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-10 ISO-00 INRE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04

RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 SAM-01 OMB-01 AID-20 IO-14

CU-04 ACDA-19 DRC-01 EB-11 TRSE-00 (ISO) W

----- 047688

O R 261105Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7846

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMCONSUL UDORN

USLO PEKING

USMISSION USUN

SECDEF

DIA

USIA WASHDC

CINCPAC

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CINCPACAF

CDR USSAG NKP

CDR 13 AF ADVON UDORN

USDAO SAIGON

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COMUSMACTHAI

DODSPECREP BANKGOK
DODSPECREP NKP
354 TFW KORAT
CHSPECACTS BANGKOK
CDR JCRC NKP
7 ACCS KORAT
432 TFW UDORN
8 TFW UBON
56 SOW NKP
388 TFW KORAT

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 VIENTIANE 1565

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MOPS, PGOV, PFOR, PINT, ECON, LA
SUBJECT: LAO WEEKLY SITREP - FEBRUARY 26

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD; 13 AF ADVON, 432 TFW, 56 SOW,
388 TFW, 354 TFW AND 8 TFW FOR DO/DI; MACTHAI FOR J-2
AND PAO

REF: VIENTIANE 1342

BEGIN SUMMARY: POLITICAL ACTIVITY DURING PERIOD FEBRUARY
19-26 INTENSIFIED AS PRIME MINISTER, ON FIRST ANNIVERSARY
OF LAO CEASEFIRE, ANNOUNCED THAT COALITION GOVERNMENT
WOULD BE FORMED WITHIN A WEEK. SIGNS ARE GOOD FOR IMMINENT
FORMATION OF PGNU THROUGH DIRECT INVESTITURE BY KING OF
LAOS. LPF SENIOR REPRESENTATIVE LEFT FOR SAM NEUA TODAY
AND SOUVANNA PREDICTS THAT LPF PLENIPOTENTIARY PHOUMI
VONGVICHIT WILL ARRIVE VIENTIANE THIS WEEK WITH LIST OF
LPF DESIGNEES TO PGNU AND JNPC. HE PREDICTS THAT HE AND
SOUPHANOUVONG WILL MEET IN LUANG PRABANG AND INVESTITURE
WILL TAKE PLACE SOON THEREAFTER. RLG HAS TURNED SCREW
ON LPF BY LEAKING NAME LIST OF RLG'S JNPC DESIGNEES TO
THE LOCAL PRESS. LIST INCLUDES SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF
DEPUTIES AND "YOUNG TURKS." ON MILITARY SIDE, INCIDENTS
INCREASED TO 14 DURING THE WEEK, END SUMMARY

I. IMPLEMENTING THE AGREEMENT
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1. JOINT CENTRAL COMMISSION DEVELOPMENTS
ON THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF THE SIGNING OF THE
VIENTIANE ACCORDS, FEBRUARY 21, THE JCCIA HELD ITS 14TH
PLENARY SESSION WITH FULL DELEGATIONS IN ATTENDANCE. THE
TWO SIDES REVIEWED PROCEDURES RELATING TO JOINT POLICE
FORCES (JPFS) AND PROTECTIVE MILITARY FORCES (PMFS)
OPERATIONS, INCLUDING JPF HOUSING REQUIREMENTS. ACCORDING

TO RADIO PATHET LAO (RPL), THE RLG PROMISED TO PROVIDE JPF MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION, COMMUNICATIONS AND SIGNAL EQUIPMENT, AS WELL AS OTHER EQUIPMENT. RPL ADDED THAT THE TWO SIDES AGREED TO URGENTLY COMPLY WITH PMF REGULATIONS, "SUCH AS THE DEFINING OF AREAS FOR WHICH EACH SIDE IS RESPONSIBLE AND THE NORMALIZATION OF THEIR JOINT WORK."

THE TWO SIDES FURTHER AGREED TO INSTRUCT THE JOINT TEAMS IN LUANG PRABANG AND VIENTIANE TO URGE MAYORS AND DISTRICT CHIEFS TO PUBLICIZE THE TERMS OF VIENTIANE ACCORDS AND OTHER REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO NEUTRALIZATION OF TWIN CAPITALS. DELEGATIONS ALSO AGREED FORMALLY THAT FULL TEXTS OF VIENTIANE ACCORD AND PROTOCOL SHOULD BE TRANSLATED INTO FRENCH FOR PRESENTATION TO INTERNATIONAL CONTROL COMMISSION (ICC). REPORTEDLY, TRANSLATION WILL BE DISCUSSED AT NEXT PLENARY SESSION AND, ONCE AGREEMENT IS REACHED, SUBMITTED TO ICC. ALSO, APPROVAL WAS GRANTED FOR LPF REGULAR RESUPPLY FLIGHTS TO VIENTIANE AND LUANG PRABANG. ACCORDING TO NEW SCHEDULE, THERE WILL BE ONE FLIGHT PER DAY ON TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY AND FRIDAY, COMMENCING FEBRUARY 26.

2. RLG ACTIVITIES

AT PRESS CONFERENCE FEBRUARY 22, PRIME MINISTER SOUVANNA ANNOUNCED HIS SCENARIO FOR FORMATION OF NEW COALITION GOVERNMENT IN LAOS. HE PREDICTED THAT LPF PLENIPOTENTIARY PHOUMI VONGVICHIT WOULD RETURN TO VIENTIANE "VERY SOON" AND BRING LIST OF LPF DESIGNEES FOR NEW CABINET AND JOINT NATIONAL POLITICAL COUNCIL (JNPC). IF TALKS WITH PHOUMI GO WELL, SOUVANNA WOULD MEET WITH PRINCE SOUPHANOU-VONG IN LUANG PRABANG, AND THEY, IN TURN, WOULD FIRST PAY RESPECTS TO KING, THEN REVIEW PGNU AND JNPC NOMINATIONS, CONFIDENTIAL

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AND FINALLY RETURN TO PALACE FOR DIRECT INVESTITURE OF GOVERNMENT BY KING. SOUVANNA SAID SUCH A SCENARIO IS CONSISTENT WITH THE VIENTIANE ACCORDS AND HAD BEEN IMPLICITLY APPROVED BY LAO NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION, HE STATED THAT 60 DAYS AFTER FORMATION OF PGNU ALL FOREIGN FORCES "REGARDLESS OF NATIONALITY" WILL BE WITHDRAWN FROM LAOS. HE ADDED THAT, WHILE NORTH VIETNAMESE HAVE NEVER ADMITTED PRESENCE OF NVA IN LAOS, "THEY ARE FULLY AWARE THAT THEY MUST WITHDRAW."

SOUVANNA EXPRESSED HIS REGRET OVER FACT THAT HE COULD NOT ANNOUNCE NEW PGNU ON FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF CEASE-FIRE IN LAOS, BUT EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT FORMATION OF PGNU AND JNPC WILL TAKE PLACE IN NEAR FUTURE.

HOWEVER, IN AN APPARENT EFFORT TO KEEP THE HEAT ON LPF, RLG HAS RELEASED TO PRESS NAMES OF ITS 16 NOMINEES FOR JNPC. LIST CONSISTS OF 10 NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DEPUTIES AND 6 OTHERS, INCLUDING 5 "YOUNG TURKS" ALL IN THEIR THIRTIES.

3. LPF ACTIVITIES

PHOUN SIPRASEUTH WAS UNABLE TO LEAVE VIENTIANE FEBRUARY 25, AS SCHEDULED, DUE TO BAD WEATHER CONDITIONS IN SAM NEUA BUT IS DUE TO DEPART TODAY. REPORTEDLY, HE INTENDS TO DISCUSS RLG CABINET AND JNPC DESIGNEES WITH LPF CENTRAL COMMITTEE. DESPITE SOUVANNA'S OPTIMISM, REPORTED ABOVE, THERE IS NO INDICATION WHEN PHOUMI VONGVICHIT MIGHT RETURN TO VIENTIANE.

IN SAM NEUA, LPF CENTRAL COMMITTEE CELEBRATED FEBRUARY 21 ANNIVERSARY BY HOLDING "GRAND RALLY." PHOUMI, IN HIS SPEECH ON THE OCCASION, DISCUSSED TERMS OF THE ACCORDS AND IS QUOTED BY FBIS BANGKOK (R24100Z FEB 74) AS STATING THAT "ALL LAO PARTIES, ... THE UNITED STATES, THAILAND AND OTHER FOREIGN COUNTRIES MUST SCRUPULOUSLY RESPECT AND STRICTLY IMPLEMENT THIS AGREEMENT." IN ADDITION, ON FEBRUARY 19, LPF WELCOMED ARRIVAL OF BULGARIAN COMMUNIST PARTY DELEGATION TO LPF ZONE.

MEANWHILE, IN VIENTIANE, RENOVATION OF LPF FACILITIES CONTINUES AT A BRISK PACE. SIMILARLY, LPF CULTIVATION OF

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LAO STUDENTS CONTINUES. LPF APPEARS TO BE CONCENTRATING ON STUDENTS FROM THE TEACHERS' COLLEGE, AS WELL AS ON STUDENTS FROM THE LAW SCHOOL (IRDA). STUDENTS

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-10 ISO-00 IO-14 INRE-00 SSO-00

NSCE-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10

PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 SAM-01 OMB-01 AID-20

CU-04 ACDA-19 DRC-01 EB-11 TRSE-00 (ISO) W

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O R 261105Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO RUEHCBSECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7847

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

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AMCONSUL UDORN

USLO PEKING

USMISSION USUN

SECDEF

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USIA WASHDC

CINCPAC

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CDR USSAG NKP

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7 ACCS KORAT

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56 SOW NKP

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 VIENTIANE 1565

WHO HAVE VISITED THE LPF MILITARY CAMP AT NONG THA HAVE BEEN TREATED TO LECTURES ON LPF POLICIES LACED WITH HEAVY DOSE OF ANTI-AMERICANISM, INCLUDING PHOTOS OF DOWNED U.S. AIRCRAFT AND CAPTURED U.S. EQUIPMENT. ATTENDANCE AT LPF MOVIE SHOWINGS IN VIENTIANE IS HIGH. LPF PERSONNEL HAVE ADVISED SOME YOUNG PEOPLE NOT TO ATTEND ENGLISH CLASSES AT THE LAO-AMERICAN ASSOCIATION, WHILE OTHERS HAVE ADVISED THEM TO DEMONSTRATE IF PGNU IS NOT FORMED SHORTLY. IN GENERAL, LPF SEEMS TO BE GAINING FAVOR WITH THE STUDENTS BY STRESSING THAT THEY CONSTITUTE THE FORCE FOR CHANGE IN LAO SOCIETY.

ON FEBRUARY 21, A DELEGATION OF THE FEDERATION OF LAO STUDENTS (FLS), CONSISTING OF 19 PERSONS, CALLED ON THE LPF DELEGATION. ACCORDING TO RADIO PATHET LAO, FLS SECRETARY GENERAL KHAMSAI READ STATEMENT ADDRESSED TO SOUPHANOUVONG WHICH SUPPORTED VIENTIANE ACCORDS AND EXPRESSED WILLINGNESS TO "THWART ANY ATTEMPTS AT SABOTAGE FROM WITHIN OR OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY." THE MEETING REPORTEDLY LASTED TWO HOURS.

4. OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

ACCORDING TO XAT LAO, PHOUN SIPRASEUTH DISCUSSED WITH PRIME MINISTER ON FEBRUARY 21 THE NAMES OF POSSIBLE NON-ALIGNED PERSONS TO SERVE AS MINISTER AND SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE MINISTRIES OF POST, TELEGRAPH AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS, AS WELL AS JUSTICE. THEY ALSO REPORTEDLY CONFIDENTIAL

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DISCUSSED THE NAMES OF THE "NEUTRAL PERSONALITIES" TO SERVE IN THE JNPC AS WELL AS THE PROCESS OF DIRECT INVESTITURE OF PGNU BY THE KING.

REACTION TO FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF THE VIENTIANE ACCORDS WAS NOTED IN BOTH THE CHINESE AND NORTH VIETNAMESE MEDIA. THE CHINESE OFFERED RATHER BLAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT WHICH FAILED TO CONDEMN U.S. FOR INTERFERING WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF ACCORDS. NORTH VIETNAMESE, ON OTHER HAND, STATED THAT SITUATION IN LAOS DURING PAST YEAR SHOWS THAT "U.S. IMPERIALISTS HAVE NOT YET RENOUNCED THEIR SCHEME OF IMPOSING NEOCOLONIALISM ON LAOS."

AFP, IN AN ITEM PUBLISHED FEBRUARY 18, HAD DIFFICULTY RESTRAINING ITS PLAUDITS FOR FRENCH AMBASSADOR CARDI'S RECENT 48-HOUR TRIP TO SAM NEUA. ARTICLE STATED THAT VISIT "SHOWS FRANCE'S PRIVILEGED POSITION IN REGARD TO BOTH (LAO) SIDES."

II. STUDENT ACTIVITIES

WHILE NATIONWIDE STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS HAVE NOW ABATED, STUDENT ACTIVISM HAS NOT. ON THE 21ST, STUDENTS

AT IRDA, THE LYCEE AND THE SCHOOL OF MEDICINE IN VIENTIANE PUT UP PLACARDS SUPPORTING THE VIENTIANE ACCORDS, BUT THERE WERE NO STREET DEMONSTRATIONS.

ON OTHER FRONTS, IN PAKSE, THE CASINOS WERE CLOSED AFTER STUDENT AGITATION.

ON FEBRUARY 20, A GROUP OF APPROXIMATELY 20 IRDA STUDENTS DEMONSTRATED BRIEFLY IN FRONT OF THAI EMBASSY IN VIENTIANE. THEY PRESENTED PETITION TO THAI AMBASSADOR WHICH OBJECTED TO THAI POL EMBARGO AND ALLEGED HIGH TRANSIT COSTS FOR GOODS DESTINED FOR LAOS.

DURING WEEK, SOUVANNA MET WITH DELEGATIONS FROM LAO STUDENTS FEDERATION AND LAO ALUMNI OF UNIVERSITIES IN SOCIALIST COUNTRIES. STUDENTS' ACTIONS SUCH AS THESE OFFER FURTHER PROOF THAT STUDENTS ARE FAST AWAKENING TO FACT THAT THEY HAVE A POLITICALLY IMPORTANT ROLE TO PLAY IN LAOS.

III. SECURITY SITUATION

THE WEEK ENDING FEBRUARY 26 SAW AN UPSWING IN MILITARY ACTIVITY, CONFIDENTIAL

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WITH 14 INCIDENTS REPORTED. THE INCIDENTS WERE SCATTERED THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY, WITH EXCEPTION OF MR-V. ONE INCIDENT TOOK PLACE IN MR-I, 22 KMS NORTH/NORTHEAST OF PAK LAY IN AN AREA THAT HAD BEEN QUIET SINCE OCTOBER 1973. AS 50-MAN RLG COMPANY 31 KMS NORTHWEST OF LONG TIENG IN MR-II WAS FORCED FROM ITS POSITIONS BY AN ENEMY ATTACK ON FEBRUARY 24; RLAFLATER FLEW 4 T-28 SORTIES AGAINST ENEMY-OCCUPIED BUNKERS IN THE VICINITY. FRIENDLY FORCES WERE ATTACKED 3 TIMES IN THE KHONG SEDONE AREA OF MR-IV. SMALL CLASHES WERE REPORTED 6-8 KMS SOUTH/SOUTHWEST OF PHIAFAY, ALTHOUGH THERE IS SUSPICION THAT THESE INCIDENTS INVOLVED SMUGGLING OPERATIONS WITHOUT MILITARY OBJECTIVES. RADIO PATHET LAO BROADCAST ACCUSATIONS OF RLG CEASEFIRE VIOLATIONS AND CLAIMED A RECENT VISIT OF UNNAMED U.S. DEFENSE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS TO THAILAND WAS RELATED TO PLANS TO EXPAND U.S. INVOLVEMENT IN LAOS AND CAMBODIA.

IV. ECONOMIC SITUATION

COST-OF-LIVING INDEX DROPPED SOMEWHAT DURING THE WEEK, INCREASED SLIGHTLY BY WEEK'S END, BUT WAS STILL BELOW EARLY FEBRUARY LEVEL. FOREIGN EXCHANGE DEMAND FOR WEEK ENDING FEBRUARY 22 DECLINED FROM HIGH LEVEL OF PREVIOUS WEEK TO ABOUT AVERAGE LEVEL OF CY-73.

DONOR ADVISORY BOARD MET UNDER CHAIRMANSHIP OF FINANCE MINISTER SISOUK. SISOUK STATED THAT, IN VIEW OF IMPENDING FORMATION OF PGNU WHICH WOULD WANT TO REVIEW PROPOSED FY-75 BUDGET AND MEASURES CONTEMPLATED BY THE GOVERNMENT TO REDUCE THE INFLAT-

IONARY GAP AND PENDING STATEMENT OF GOJ OF ITS CONTRIBUTION TO
FEOF, CONCLUSION OF CY-74 FEOF NEGOTIATIONS WOULD HAVE TO BE
DELAYED UNTIL APRIL.

TWO IBRD OFFICERS MADE ORIENTATION VISITS TO VIENTIANE
FEBRUARY 20-22 AND MET WITH HIGH-LEVEL RLG OFFICIALS, ACTING
USAID DIRECTOR, AND LPF REPRESENTATIVE SOTH PHETRASY. VISIT
PREPARED WAY FOR SMALL IBRD ECONOMIC AND PROJECT IDENTIFICATION
TEAM WHICH IBRD TEAMS PROJECTS WILL ARRIVE SHORTLY
AFTER
INVESTITURE OF PGNU.
WHITEHOUSE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: COALITION GOVERNMENT, ECONOMIC CONDITIONS, ARMED FORCES, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, CENTRAL LEGISLATURE, PEACE PLANS, LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS, GROUND COMBAT OPERATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 FEB 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: rowelle0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974VIENTI01565
Document Source: CORE
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Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
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Original Previous Classification: n/a
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EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

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